

Haemostatic Gauze/Granules

Haemostatic gauze/granules can be used on any open wound when haemorrhage cannot be controlled by application of direct pressure alone, or wounds with soft tissue loss. It is of value in controlling haemorrhage at junctional areas where a tourniquet cannot be applied such as the groin, axilla, and neck. This should be used in conjunction with an advance care plan and ReSPECT process/ Treatment Escalation Plan.

It is suitable for arterial and venous bleeding. It is effective at clotting blood containing anti-coagulants.

There are no special storage instructions.

Haemostatic gauze does not require cutting, it can easily be torn to the required size. When used on facial wounds, care must be taken to avoid contact with eyes.

Haemostatic gauze dressings or haemostatic granules should be used to pack the wound at the point of haemorrhaging. Cavities should be packed with gauze down to the wound bed.

Direct pressure should be applied for at least 3 minutes to allow a stable clot to form. Continued direct significant pressure may be required to control bleeding after application of haemostatic gauze dressings.

When using a haemostatic gauze, it is important to cover the entire bleeding surface and where necessary use another gauze on top if bleeding soaks through the first layer. If the wound is deep, then it may be necessary to use other dressings on top to provide bulk and pressure to the wound.

Haemostatic gauze/granules is a Medical Device. It cannot be prescribed on an FP10. It can be ordered via general or health purchases.

It is licensed for “pre-hospital” care i.e. emergency, military scenarios. The active constituent is chitosan – a natural polymer derived from shrimp shells. Chitosan works by reacting with blood to swell, and on forming a gel merge together to form a clot. Haemostatic gauze/granules work with a background treatment of anticoagulant products.

Use in palliative care would be ‘off-licence’ at present.

Haemostatic gauze/granules do not impair wound healing, they are single use products only.

Haemostatic gauze/granules, if used, can be left in situ for up to 24 hours before being gently removed.

All staff likely to be involved in using Haemostatic gauze should view the online training film in advance of a product being ordered and subsequently used for a patient.

Contraindications

Product warning – patients with allergies to shellfish to use alternative management, staff advise caution on handling due to potential risk.

Use within abdominal, chest cavity and open skull fracture where bleeding point cannot be visualised, wounds which are unamenable to pressure. It is not indicated for use in the mouth or eyes.